



Seals & Sealing Network

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Majority of Canadians Support the Seal Hunt and Oppose WTO Ruling

Ottawa, Ontario, January 30, 2014 – The results of a poll commissioned by the Seals and Sealing Network (SSN) shows that a clear majority of Canadians support the seal hunt and oppose the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) decision to uphold the European Union’s (EU) ban on Canadian seal products.

According to the poll conducted by Abacus Data, 70 per cent of Canadians are in favour of the seal hunt in some form. Only 22 per cent of Canadians indicated that they are opposed to the seal hunt in any form. Furthermore, 69 per cent of Canadians are opposed to banning commercial products, such as seal products, based on moral grounds unless it is based on scientific evidence.

As the Government of Canada prepares to defend the interests of the Canadian sealing sector before the WTO, this new poll shows Canadians strongly support such action. Not only do Canadians think the WTO ruling is unjust, they also see the “moral grounds” decision setting a dangerous precedent; 63 per cent of Canadians believe the WTO decision will have unintended negative impacts on the trade in other sustainable use, natural resource and energy products. Nearly two-thirds of Canadians believe if this decision is to stand it would be used as a basis for challenging other trade sectors in Canada such as agriculture, fishing and even oil and gas products.

Canadian sealing plays an essential role in the economies of Inuit and coastal communities and in the livelihoods of tens of thousands of Canadians. The EU ban on seal products and the WTO ruling are not supported by science or facts; instead, they utilize “public moral grounds” to challenge thousands of Canadians’ right to utilize an abundant, natural and renewable resource in their communities. According to a January 7th article in the *National Post*, even the EU’s own legal opinion agreed that there was “*no basis for the ban under the EU’s common competition rules.*”

Canadians across the country stand behind the sealing sector and the Government’s decision to appeal the WTO ruling. According to the poll released today, a slight majority of Canadians, 52 per cent, would even go as far as calling for trade sanctions against the EU until the ban is lifted.

About the Seals and Sealing Network:

The Seals and Sealing Network is a national non-profit organization promoting sustainable and wise use principles committed to the conservation and respectful harvesting of the world's seal species through sound scientific management and internationally accepted sustainable use practices. The Seals and Sealing Network is comprised of Conservationists, Inuit, Veterinarians, Health care practitioners, Government, and Industry representatives. For more information, please go to or www.sealsandsealing.net

Survey Methodology:

The survey was conducted online with 1,996 respondents in English and French using an internet survey programmed and collected by Abacus Data. A random sample of panelists was invited to participate in the survey from a representative panel of Canadians. The survey was completed from January 14 to 18, 2014.

Since the online survey was not a random, probability based sample, a margin of error could not be calculated. The Marketing Research and Intelligence Association prohibits statements about margins of sampling error or population estimates with regard to most online panels.

The margin of error for a probability-based random sample of 1,996 respondents using a probability sample is +/- 2.2%, 19 times out of 20. The data was weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Canada's population according to age, gender, educational attainment, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding. Detailed results can be found [here](#).

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